Now she decided she had been very foolish to be frightened of the Signor. Yet she knew there was something about him which she disliked although she could not put it into words.

They set off again, Enrico demanding to be told stories that kept him amused for a little while. Then he wandered about the carriage which fortunately they had to themselves. The courier gave him some small coins to play with which he used like tiddleywinks. Altogether it was a very long day, and the next one seemed even longer.

When they arrived in Paris they had to change trains. The wait between enabled Luella to go to the Ladies' cloakroom and wash Enrico's face and hands as well as her own. She had travelled too long with her father not to be able to make herself comfortable even in the most unlikely places.

She had never cared particularly for trains and preferred travelling by ship. When they set off again it was a relief to know that they were at last getting nearer to England. Enrico talked incessantly about the 'beeg sheep' in which they were to travel across the Channel.

It was a pleasant surprise when they got to Calais to find it was a sunny day, the sea was calm, and the ship was not too crowded. Enrico wanted to run round the decks. Alberto Drago shared the responsibility with Luella to ensure that he did not fall overboard. Finally the white cliffs of Dover came in sight. Luella thought she had never been more pleased to see the shores of England.

But there was yet another train journey to London.

Now she began to feel afraid. She knew instinctively that Signor Vecchio had not sent a letter to the Duke as he had promised he would. She was certain that he had every intention of breaking his promise.

However, when they arrived at the station it was still early in the afternoon. The courier hired a hackney carriage and ordered the driver to take them to Gatestone House in Park Lane. London looked exciting, the buildings impressive, the trees and flowers in the park colourful. When they arrived it seemed a large and very impressive mansion.

Now Luella was feeling extremely nervous and her heart was beating uncomfortably in her breast. Alberto Drago got out of the carriage first. He knocked on the front door and spoke to the footman who opened it. The footman then fetched the butler who had a long conversation with Mr Drago.

Luella could not hear what was being said. However, it did not surprise her when the courtier came back to say that the Duke was in the country. If they wanted to contact him they would have to go to Gatestone Castle in Berkshire.

Although it was a setback, Luella could not help giving a little sigh of relief. She had no wish to meet the Duke when she was feeling tired and dishevelled by a long journey. She thought too that Enrico was looking untidy and rather dirty.

"Surely we cannot go there tonight?" she asked the courier.

"No, of course not," he replied. "It is a long distance, and I shall have to hire a carriage, or rather, what is called here a 'post-chaise'."